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*The Kissimmee prairie.*

*Southern colonization company.*



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**THE KISSIMMEE  
PRAIRIE  
FLORIDA**







SOUTHERN COLONIZATION CO.



# THE KISSIMMEE PRAIRIE

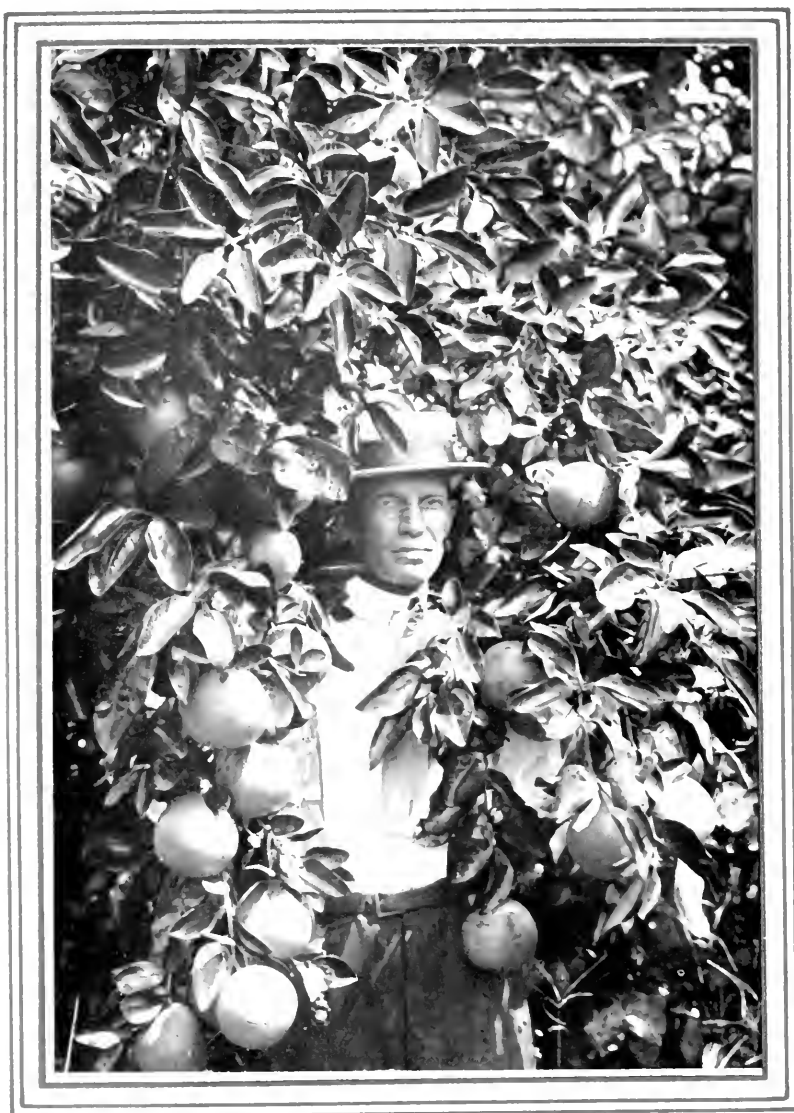
*The Part of  
Florida you Want*

*Sold in the Way  
you want it*



SOUTHERN • COLONIZATION  
C O M P A N Y

KANSAS CITY      SAINT PAUL      CHICAGO  
INDIANAPOLIS      JACKSONVILLE



Cape May, N.J. 1910-11, Southern Colonization Company

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# The Kissimmee Prairie

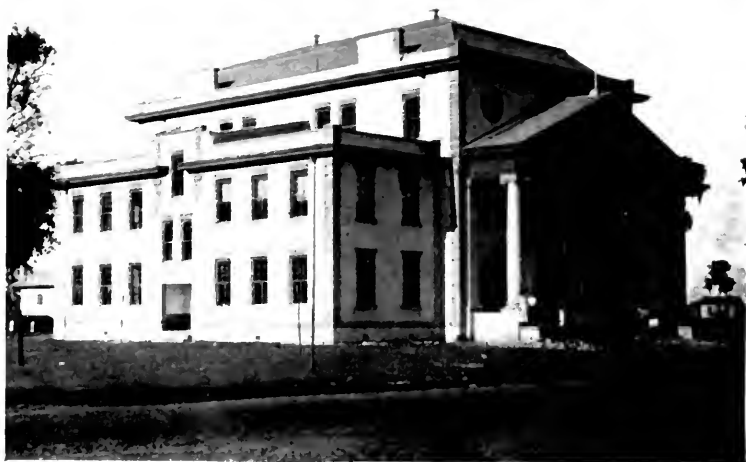
ITS RELATION TO THE REVERSAL OF THE DIRECTION  
OF MIGRATION AND THE FOOD SHORTAGE



**I**T is perhaps fortunate for America—certainly it is fortunate for the present generation—that the development of the South has been held back so long. Had not the slave system, the Civil war, and the mistakes of reconstruction discouraged immigration, investment and development, the South, with its mild climate, its fertile soils and its abundance and variety of agricultural production, would have been so alluring that the subsequent settlement of the colder North would have been very difficult. But, as it was, the stream of settlement flowed North and West, with the result that that portion of our great republic in which nature is the sternest and the conditions of living the hardest, has become densely settled while the South still has vast areas of unsettled lands, and natural resources that have been little more than touched. The prejudice born of habit has been so strong heretofore that half a million American citizens have migrated to Canada within the last fifteen years, and have in many instances paid more for land than they could have acquired good land for in the southern states.

The Day of  
the South

But now the times have changed. The South's time has come. The historic routes of migration have been changed and even reversed. The south-bound trains these days are filled with northern and western people going



Public School Building, Kissimmee

## The South Is Ready

South to buy land and make investments and till the soil. The 1909 school census of Texas indicates that that state now has 6,000,000 people, a gain of 2,500,000 in a decade. Northern people have been pouring into that imperial state at the rate of 200,000 a year. And now the tide of immigration is revivifying the old South. On every side there are signs that since the southern white people are again in thorough mastery in their own home, there is about to set in for the Southland such an era of prosperity as no other section of America has ever experienced. This reign of prosperity has come with a rush and an emphasis that were not known in the West, because the West was a new country. It was without capital, and it had everything to provide that goes to make up the economic basis of civilization. In the South, however, the main work, the foundations of prosperity, have been accomplished these many years. The railways are built, the steamship lines are there, great market towns exist, there is already a large population, commerce and finance are thoroughly organized. There is required only the presence and activity of more people to utilize to their limit the business machines and organizations already at hand. It took the West three decades to get ready to get rich. The South is now ready to get rich, and there remains only the turning out of wealth, the minting of the gold as it were. In this last phase there is an abundant opportunity for men of the North. Having wrested wealth from the inhospita-



Osceola County Court House, Kissimmee

ble North, they now have an opportunity, ready-made, to repeat their successes in the genial South.

The farmers of the South have just put into their pockets the proceeds of a billion-dollar cotton crop. The southern lumbermen produced \$440,000,000 worth of lumber in 1909, the southern mines produced \$358,000,000; altogether the southern farms yielded up \$2,550,000,000. The South has now invested in manufactures \$2,214,000,000, and its national banks alone have individual deposits aggregating \$700,000,000. With all this accumulated wealth there are untold latent resources waiting to be turned into consumable wealth. Only two-fifths of the tillable land of the South is now under the plow.

Of all the old southern states, no other state has gotten so well started in the new era of development as Florida. A number of circumstances have united to attract northern men and northern capital to this great state. In the first place, it was sparsely settled, it has even now only 750,000 people, though it is the second largest state east of the Mississippi River; in the second place its delightful climate has long made it a national resort and playground, and has thus given the state wide advertisement; in the third place, the large amount of railway building in recent years and its strategic location with respect to external and internal water transportation and its proximity to the Panama Canal

**Florida is in  
the Van**



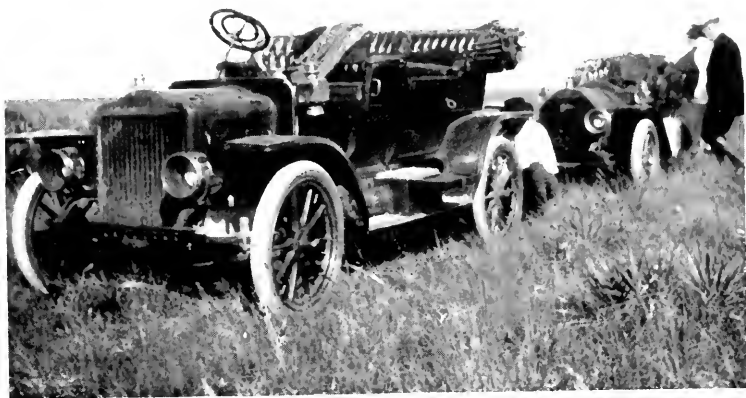
Egg Plants, O'Bery Ranch, Kissimmee

have deeply impressed the northern investor. The State of Florida has all the advantages over the North that other southern states have and some that none of them have. Generally speaking, Florida can raise everything that is raised in the North and much that cannot be raised there.

## Success in Florida

Clark Howell, the famous editor of the Atlanta Constitution, says: "The man does not live today who, if energetic, capable and honest, cannot make a success in the South, and there are more fortunes to be made here than in any other part of the continent." This is more true of the State of Florida than of any other southern state, for there, in addition to its superior advantages, the way has been blazed. The man who takes up life in Florida today needs make no experiment. The experimentation has been done by others by people from the North. All he needs to do is to follow in their footsteps, do what they have done and profit by their example. Nature is so kind and so fruitful in Florida that it has been too easy to make a living there. In general, fortunes are made by those who have acquired invaluable training in making a living. It has been so easy to make a living in Florida that the natives in the rural districts, lacking stimulus, have not made fortunes. But the man reared under other conditions desires more than a mere living. He wants to extract the utmost comfort and luxury and the





Our Automobiles on the Prairie.

highest possible standard of living from the favorable conditions provided by nature. Another thing that has held back the development of this fortunate state until recent times is the fact that most of the land opened up by railway and water transportation has been covered with timber, and the labor and expense necessary to prepare it for cultivation have been an impediment to rapid development of large areas.

In central Florida there are great stretches of the finest prairie in the world. These Florida prairies combine the ease of cultivation of the Northwestern prairie with an incomparable climate. Imagine the Red River Valley of the North with the climate of Florida! Imagine the plains of Alberta with a climate that permits three or four crops a year from the same land! Consider the astounding development that has come to those northern prairies in recent years with their hard climate, their remoteness from the sea-board, their single crop a year, and then calculate what is coming to Florida with its favorable climate, its perpetual crops, its nearness to markets and its cheap water transportation to the great population centers of the South and East. And then, realize that land—prairie land, fertile land—can be bought on these southern plains for far less money than on the northern plains.

**The Florida  
Prairies**



On the Kissimmee at Turkey Hammock

**Kissimmee,  
The Beautiful**

The most extensive and best of the Florida prairies is the great prairie of the Kissimmee Valley, commonly known as the Kissimmee Prairie, which lies on either side of the Kissimmee River in Osceola, De Soto and Polk counties. This prairie is clad in a rich growth of grass, green the year around, with here and there a clump of trees to give variety to the scene and with enough slope to give good drainage. Being remote from rapid and reliable transportation and being dependent on teams or slow river boats for freighting, there has hitherto been no incentive to capital to exploit this great valley. But now two railway extensions are to be pushed into it, and a complete transformation is at hand, from a great almost uninhabited prairie wilderness to a district of dense population and cultivation. Perceiving the flow of capital and population toward Florida, the organizers of the Southern Colonization Company—men with wide and varied experience in land development and colonization in Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan—went to Florida with a view to ascertaining whether there was in that great state an available tract of smooth prairie. What they wanted was the contour of the northern prairie land, with which they were familiar—land ready for the plow. Great was their satisfaction when their automobiles rolled out from the pine forest on the north onto the wide, green prairie of the Kissimmee. Here was what they wanted—the land of the North,



Street in Kissimmee with Live Oaks.

the climate of the South. Their next step was to take up the transportation problem. Having assured themselves that at least one railway would be built through the district as soon as it was needed, they purchased practically the whole prairie, odd and even sections, solid.

This purchase of nearly 500,000 acres has been the great commercial event of the year in Florida. The people there realize what it means to the development of the state to have a body of practical, northern men of long experience, get behind so large a tract. The purchase means that Florida will now have what it has never had before—the systematic marketing of an immense tract of first-class land by a high-grade company. There has been need of the handling of large tracts by a big company of reliability and standing. It is now possible for syndicates and local companies to buy tracts of any size, subdivide it among themselves or retail it, as they please. The 10-acre lot business is praiseworthy, but there was a demand for a company actively engaged in selling large pieces of its own land. There are many different companies engaged in selling small lots, but the man who wanted to buy a quarter section, a section, or 5,000 to 10,000 acres did not know where to go. He had to go and hunt up the owners and then dicker. The Southern Colonization Company comes to such men. It is its business to find them.

**A History-  
Making Event**



A Cattleman—A "Hammock" in the Background.

## From Snow to Verdure

A trip to examine this beautiful prairie tract—from the cold North to the warm South, from snow to verdure—is nothing less than a delightful outing. Leaving Chicago at night on one of the luxurious and comfortable through trains, Jacksonville, the metropolis of Florida, is reached thirty-four hours later. It is worth while to spend a day in Jacksonville in order to get an understanding of the new commercial South. It is a city of fine hotels, towering office buildings; modern, well-stocked stores, and manifold business activities. However, within two hours after reaching Jacksonville, a comfortable train can be taken over the Atlantic Coast Line railway to Kissimmee, which will bring the traveler to the latter place by the middle of the afternoon. The train runs through the towering pine forests, the trees of which are everywhere tapped for turpentine, through orange and grape fruit groves, through neat, carefully tilled truck-gardens, by beautiful lakes; past cypress swamps and groves of live-oak, draped with Spanish moss; by pretty villages and lively cities, past the picturesque outside-chimney shacks of the natives, and comes to the beautiful little grove-embowered City of Kissimmee on the shores of the beautiful lake of Tohopekaliga. Our automobiles will be waiting to take the traveler for a drive around this little city of 1,000 and a tour of the surrounding country, giving him an opportunity to visit innumerable citrus groves and truck-farms. He will be amazed



Lake Tohopekaliga.

at the excellence of the roads, surfaced with marl and as smooth as asphalt. These Kissimmee people are great believers in good roads and are spending \$1,500 to \$1,800 a mile on their roads, roads over which one horse can pull an incredibly large load. Several thriving northern colonies are established near Kissimmee. At St. Cloud, ten miles east 2,000 people have settled within eighteen months. Every train brings its quota of permanent residents.

After a comfortable night's rest the traveler finds the automobile waiting for him again, and he is off through the stately pine forest, southeast to Kissimmee Prairie. The built roads soon end, but the natural roads are good, and the auto goes humming in and out through the trees, through which the glorious sunlight streams, lighting up the openings and casting deep shadows across the road. Everywhere in the woods, which are almost entirely free from undergrowth, graze cattle and sheep, and now and then a grazing sow, half-wild, scurries across the trail with her squealing brood. Perhaps a glimpse may be caught of a herd of deer or now and then a wild turkey. Birds, some familiar, some strange, flit from tree to tree and startled rabbits dodge in and out of the clumps of scrub palmetto. Three hours after leaving Kissimmee the forest thins out and then ceases.

There to the south lies the prairie, grass-clad and as uniform of surface as any prairie of the North or West!

By Auto to  
the Land



On the Road to the Prairie

## The Far-Flung Prairie

After the somber forest, the broad-stretched prairie flooded with sunlight, the grass swaying in the breezes, the fleecy clouds drifting lazily, a palm, "Jumbuck" in the distance, great winged cranes and herons flapping lazily overhead, seems a very Elysium. A few miles back the settlers were burning or pulling out stumps, jerking great logs out of the ground, raking and burning to clear the land; but here, except for an occasional tuft of palmetto scrub, the land is ready for the plow. Back there in the forest it costs \$25 to \$50 an acre to clear the ground; here the work has been done by forest fires which centuries ago cleared the land, and since then annual prairie fires have kept out the timber. There are several varieties of wild grass on the prairie, which make excellent feed on the root when green and can be cured for hay. Wherever the ground is plowed and left to itself this grass springs up in remarkable luxuriance and abundance. It is worth \$15 to \$20 per ton as hay at the railway points. Here and there, giving a little touch of picturesqueness to the level prairie, are little clumps of palmetto shrub, standing from one to three feet high, and now and then a grove of palms.

## Seeing the Great Prairie

Being now on this grand prairie, the chauffeur gives the machine full speed ahead; and with nothing but a trail for most of the way, the car rushes straight south at a speed of twenty miles an hour, arriving within an



Good Water, Abundant Forage, Fat Cattle.

hour at the Company's inspection camp in the heart of the prairie where good food and comfortable beds invite him to tarry and rest. Everywhere on the prairie are grazing cattle, cattle that never have any attention beyond branding, which usually consists of grotesque ear-clipping, and are made ready for the market at a cost of a dollar or two a head. Occasionally a drove of hogs may be seen wildly scampering for shelter.

The rest of the day and, perhaps the next may be devoted to a more minute examination of the land, and possibly, to a swing through that portion of the prairie lying west of the Kissimmee River. At the ferry, the traveler may chance to meet the steamer *Roseada*, Capt. Johnson, busily engaged in distributing and collecting freight. Certainly during the day the landseeker will come to the home of Julian Montsdioca, at Turkey Hammock on the east bank of the Kissimmee River, who is superintendent for the Lee-Parsons Cattle Company. Julian usually has fresh venison on hand, and blessed is the traveler who is invited to partake of a meal with him and his family. He has a splendid grove of oranges and grape fruit and verily believes that nowhere else is there such country as the Kissimmee Prairie. The tour of examination may take the land-seeker to the village of Bassenger in the southern part of the prairie. Here he will find oranges, grape fruit and gardens, though the distance from

## The Camp in the Prairie



Sunrise on the Kissimmee.

markets has discouraged large plantations on fields. Having completed the inspection of the prairie, the tourist may return to Kissimmee by the same or another route.

**The Virgin Soil** The soil of the prairie is generally a sandy loam, which can be easily broken and plowed, and even without humus or fertilizer will produce bountifully. Somewhat light colored beneath the surface, it soon becomes black again, and is underlaid with clay. Here and there, in the timber and on the prairies, are what are called hammocks. The word "hammock" is supposed to be derived from the Indian, and is said to signify "where hard wood grows." These hammocks are usually surrounded with a belt of hard wood, and sometimes there are sloughs or ponds around them. The top-soil in them is a little heavier than on the prairie proper. Along the lakes, rivers and sloughs another quality of soil, characterized by a large amount of decayed vegetable matter, is found. This sort of land, when properly drained, is especially adapted to truck-farming.

At one time the Florida prairies were doubtless under water, and, to quote the words of the Florida Department of Agriculture (Quarterly Bulletin, July, 1909), "approximate in character, texture of soil and period and mode of formation to the swamp lands, differing only in being practically destitute of





Fat Cattle in the Branding Corral.

timber." The same bulletin describes the swamp lands as "unquestionably the most durable rich lands in the state." The prairie is simply land that was formerly swamp, but which, through some geological change, has been provided with natural drainage. It has the richness of the swamp land without its drawbacks. The prairie soil throughout is mixed with "more or less clay, lime and organic matter." The lime is derived from the remains of myriad forms of marine life laid down through the geological ages. The soil is perfectly suited to the climate. In the moist climate of Florida a heavy clay top-soil would be practically worthless. The soil that nature has provided is exactly suited to the environment. It is easily drained and yet it can easily be so handled as to retain moisture. It is friable and makes a perfect seed bed.

All who live on the prairie testify to the excellence of its climate. It never gets so hot in the summer as on the northern prairies and rarely, if ever, does the temperature get below the frost point in winter. The heat of the summer is tempered by balmy breezes. It is always comfortable in the shade, and the night almost invariably calls for warm covering for comfortable sleep. The husky, well-nourished, healthy looking people of the prairie attest the salubrity of the climate. The average elevation of the land is about 50 feet above the sea-level. According to the

**Mild, Equable  
Climate**



IN THE BEAUTIFUL



## FRUITFUL KISSIMMEE VALLEY

1. Pine Groves, No.
2. Cleary Plant (the "S. 1000" of X. p.)
3. A Little Lake
4. Grape Hammock, Kissimmee Valley
5. Central Experiment Station, Kissimmee



Flowing Artesian Well, O'Bery Farm.

report of the Commissioner of Agriculture of Florida for the year 1907, there was no killing frost during the whole year in this district; the highest temperature was 98, the lowest 40 and the mean annual temperature 73.7. The rainfall was 47.20 inches, the greatest monthly precipitation being 9.43 inches in June and the least, .24 inches, in March. There were 180 clear days, 141 partly cloudy days and 44 cloudy days.

The State of Florida has a lower death rate than any other state in the Union. The climate favors an out-door life, which is always promotive of health. Notwithstanding the state's southern location, flies, mosquitoes and insects generally are not so numerous or bothersome as in the northern states.

## Perpetual Harvest

In this climate the careful, thoughtful farmer keeps his ground producing all the year around, taking off from one to four crops. Every month is a growing month. This enables the Florida farmer to "aim" his crops to mature at times when the market is barest of what he produces. He may alternate crops with a view to proper rotation, or he may bring on the same kind of crops. He may plant Irish potatoes in the winter, and then when they are dug, plant sweet potatoes. Or he may plant Irish potatoes again in September and October and harvest them in December and January. In January the truck farms are green with lettuce and celery and other young crops. Strawberries come on in



Kissimmee Truck Garden and Orchard.

December and continue until March and April. Oranges may be gathered from November till June; grape fruit from November till February; lemons in June and July; kumquats from December to February; plums in February; mulberries in March and April; bananas in April; dewberries and peaches in May, June and July; blueberries in June; watermelons and cantaloupes in June and July; grapes, figs and guavas in July, August, and September; Japanese persimmons in September and October. Among the crops not mentioned above are asparagus, egg plant, tomatoes, cucumbers, peanuts, onions, peppers, corn, Kaffir corn, oats, sugar cane, cassava, rice, velvet beans, peas, beets, squash, cow-peas, string beans, cauliflower, pineapples, avocadas, pecans, and a number of grasses, native and imported.

With all these fruits and crops at his disposal, many of which can be matured at any required time in the year, the Florida farmer has no trouble in keeping himself and his land busy. Of course, if he did not liberally resort to fertilizers his land could not stand such treatment. The up-to-date intensive farmer believes in using fertilizer in large quantities and making his land produce to the limit. If he were raising small or less valuable crops, he could not do this. As a rule, the fruit trees, even on the richest soil, require the application of a certain amount of fertilizer to get the best results. The fates have been kind to

**High Pressure  
Farming**



"Where Every Prospect Pleases."

Florida, for they have endowed it with immense phosphate beds, from which are dug an important component element of the fertilizers that are used to force her crops and reinforce her soil. Practically every sort of fruit or crop named above is or can be raised on the Kissimmee prairie.

**Returns per Acre**      The Kissimmee Prairie is chiefly in Osceola and De Soto counties. The report of the State Commissioner of Agriculture for the year 1907-8 gives data for the following figures as to yield and value of the crops specified, in one or the other of the counties:

Product	Yield Per Acre	Value Per Acre
Rice	30 bushels	\$ 45.00
Oats	40 bushels	40.00
Sweet Potatoes	90 bushels	47.29
Velvet Beans	20 bushels	37.90
Millet	2 tons	40.00
Native Hay	1 1/2 tons	30.00
Field Pea Hay	2 tons	36.00
Field Pea Hay	15 bushels	22.50
Irish Potatoes	127 bushels	127.00
Cantaloupes	80 crates	320.00
Watermelons	125.00	125.00
Grape Fruit	240 boxes	480.00
Beets	200 crates	400.00
Cantaloupes	125 crates	150.00
Peppers	100 crates	200.00
Squash	100 crates	100.00
Strawberries	12,000 quarts	280.00
Pears	136 barrels	139.00



Kissimmee Sugar Cane Plantation

The foregoing figures are actual averages made from the entire cultivated area of one or the other of the counties, which will be greatly exceeded by the best farmers. For example, as high as 800 bushels of sweet potatoes and 100 bushels of Irish potatoes may be raised to an acre.

As yet but little intensive farming has been done in the Kissimmee Valley, but speaking in a general way, the following figures for a few products give an idea of the returns from intensive farming:

**Intensive  
Farming**

Product.	Value Per Acre	Approximate Cost Per Acre
Lettuce . . . . .	\$ 954.00	\$150.00
Celery . . . . .	1,925.00	\$200.00 to 500.00
Cucumbers . . . . .	514.00	100.00
English Peas . . . . .	437.00	200.00
Beans . . . . .	331.00	50.00

In considering crop yields and returns it should be remembered that from one to four crops can be raised on the same land each year. Field crops can follow vegetable crops, and two vegetable crops can be made each year.

Oranges well cared for, should yield an average of \$500 per acre, but there are so many old, neglected groves, that the official statistics, which include every bearing tree, do not make a favorable showing. Almost every farmer has a few



Shandiberger Banana Plantation.

orange trees, and usually the field-crop farmer does not pay much attention to trees. The corn statistics show a rather small yield to the acre, though 75 bushels may be raised, and it is worth \$1.00 a bushel. But practically all the corn is now raised under slovenly methods, without cultivation or fertilization.

#### **Water Supply and Drainage**

Throughout the Kissimmee Valley, good drinking water may be obtained by wells fifteen to thirty feet deep. Artesian wells strike good flows at from one hundred to five hundred feet. The fall of the prairie is sufficient for good drainage, and there is no place on it that a little ditching will not relieve of surplus water. On the other hand the nature of the soil and sub-soil is such that even in the driest seasons sufficient moisture will be present for the growth and maturing of crops. The dense growth of heavy grass throughout the prairie shows that even untilled land retains an abundance of moisture at all times.

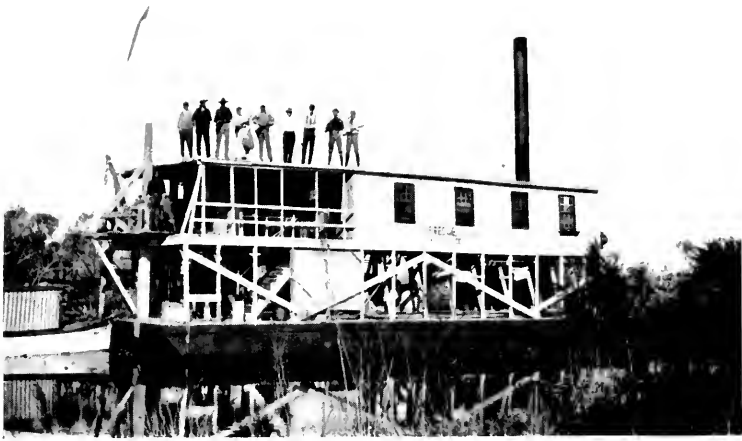
#### **Poultry**

The climatic conditions in Florida are very favorable to poultry raising. One northern settler who came to Florida five years ago now has 3,000 chickens and realizes \$13,500 annually from eggs.

#### **Game and Fish**

The Kissimmee Prairie has many attractions for the man who loves outdoor sport. Its advantages for automobiles and outdoor games generally are obvious. In the hammocks and even on the open prairies deer, quail and wild





U. S. Dredge "Kissimmee."

turkey abound. Just east of the prairie is a tract of 104,000 acres in which the owner does not hunt or permit hunting by others. Here the wild turkey, deer and other game multiply and their overflow restocks the surrounding country. The lakes and rivers afford the best of fishing. It is but a short trip to either sea coast with their world-famous hotels and resorts. A visit to them is most exhilarating. In the winter season the wealth and beauty of America may there be seen. Train after train of solid Pullman coaches rolls down from the north, bringing health- and pleasure-seekers, fleeing from the wintry blasts of the north country. They may not find the fountain of eternal youth, searching for which four centuries ago hither came Ponce de Leon, but they do find a new lease of life and a new joy of living.

Florida is now covered with a network of admirable railway systems. Kissimmee is on the main line of the Atlantic Coast Railway between Jacksonville and Tampa and enjoys a passenger service of three trains a day each way, and excellent miscellaneous and fruit-express service. The Kissimmee Prairie is at the present without a railway—and that is the sole reason that it has waited till now for development. Forty miles is not a great distance for an automobile, but it is too far for wagon transportation, and the service rendered by the river steamers has been too irregular and leisurely to provide the sort of transportation that is required

## Transportation

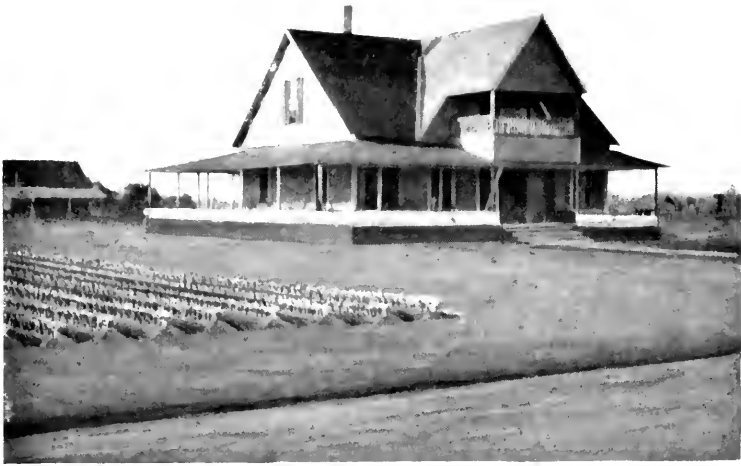


Scene in a Kissimmee Rice Field.

for settlement and commerce. Now, however, a railway is assured, and by the time those who now purchase the land are ready to develop their selections railway service will be provided. The coming of the railway, which is to be built south from St. Cloud junction, as shown on the accompanying map, will of itself double and treble the value and the price of this prairie land. Hence the present lack of transportation is fortunate for the man who invests now. Another line of railway is to be built from Haines City southeast, and will afford access to that part of the prairie that lies west of the Kissimmee river. The right-of-way for this extension has already been obtained. The United States government is now making a survey of the Kissimmee River, and the government will soon spend \$300,000 improving the channel. So, in the future, the river will be used much more than now, especially for heavy time-freight. At present it is the means of transportation for practically all of the supplies brought to the prairie and for all of its products that are shipped out.

### **Fine Wagon Roads**

Osceola County is planning to extend its splendid system of wagon roads to the prairie. These roads are surfaced with a sort of marl, deposits of which are to be found at several places. When such a road is built from Kissimmee to the prairie, two hours will easily suffice for the trip in an automobile.



Home of a New Settler.

The Lee-Parsons Cattle Company has marketed thousands of head of fat cattle from the Kissimmee Prairie, and Mr. J. M. Lee, the active manager of the Company, has had extensive experience in general farming and citrus fruit culture, his grove at Southport, near Kissimmee, being the largest orange grove in that part of the state. Mr. Lee does not hesitate to say that with transportation facilities the Kissimmee Prairie will have a great future. He is a great believer in diversified farming. "The man," he says, "who takes 160 acres of that prairie and handles it right will soon be on the high road to prosperity. Raising forage crops and feeding his cattle instead of leaving them to shift for themselves, he can easily take care of fifty head. We don't claim that Florida is a corn state, but we have raised seventy-five bushels to the acre on our place, and with the right sort of cultivation, it should be easy to produce good corn crops every year. Then the Kissimmee Prairie farmer should keep some hogs, and some chickens. Add to his livestock and corn, hay and other forage crops, a few acres of oranges and grape fruit, and some truck farming, and you will have a combination that can never be beaten by any turn of the weather or the markets. The drainage problem is easily solved on this prairie, the land having a good fall; and water for domestic and irrigation purposes can be easily and inexpensively obtained. I haven't pretended to enumerate the products that may be raised on the prairie. I have just sketched some of its possibilities."

**A Great Future**



Perfect Orange Grove Near Kissimmee

**"No Better  
Country in the  
World"**

At Whittier, a little settlement two miles north of the prairie, there are many farmers, and they all agree that for oranges, grape fruit, pineapples, potatoes, vegetables of all sorts, corn, sugar cane, etc., there is no better country in the world. Mr. Williams, who conducts a store and is the Whittier postmaster, is especially enthusiastic over cane raising. He gets from ten to fifteen barrels of syrup from sugar cane and each barrel is worth at least \$12. "We haven't done much in this country outside of cattle raising," he says, "but that is because we have had no market, being without a railway. But we have done enough to show that anything you would think of raising in Florida can be raised here with the greatest success. Our people are fond of taking it easy, but any man who has the ambition to make more than a living, can do it here with very little effort. The other kind can make a living without any effort. No man needs to starve in Florida. Most of us are content with plenty to eat and a shelter, but for the ambitious there are riches in store throughout the Kissimmee Valley. The climate is pleasant and healthy. I came here from Tennessee and I much prefer this climate to that of Tennessee."

**No Killing  
"Freeze"**

At Bassenger near the southern edge of the prairie, there is another considerable settlement, where the gardens and the groves bear ample testimony to the adaptation of the locality in soil and climate to practically all



Tomatoes and Peaches— A Sweet Corn Crop Preceded Tomatoes.

the crops of Florida. The people here, though largely occupied with cattle raising, do not hesitate to testify to the fertility of the soil and its great possibilities after the prairie is opened up by a railway. The same evidence is obtainable at the various settlements along the river, where there are orange groves and grape fruit plantations that were not affected by the great freeze of 1895, which was disastrous to most of Florida, thus proving that the Kissimmee Prairie is below the danger line.

One of the finest small citrus groves in Florida is that conducted by Julian Montsdioca at Turkey Hammock, who uses almost no fertilizer on his trees. Mr. Montsdioca is a cattle-man, but he is enthusiastic about the agricultural possibilities of the Kissimmee Prairie. He has made some experiments with Para grass, and has found that it will produce three heavy crops a year, thus adding another hay crop to the prairie's resources.

#### Other Opinions

Another staunch believer in the Kissimmee Valley is Capt. Johnson, who operates the steamboat line on the river. He has been traveling up and down the river for years, and has transported almost everything that has come into or gone out of the prairie. He declares that a large part of the prairie is well adapted to sugar cane culture, and expects to see the day, when large amounts of sugar cane will be raised in this region.



Fishing on the Kissimmee

C. A. Carson, merchant and banker, of Kissimmee has been long familiar with the Kissimmee Valley. He is very sanguine concerning its development on diversified farming lines. "Let a man locate on that prairie," he says, "with anywhere from forty to a hundred and sixty acres, get cattle, hogs, sheep, poultry and raise forage crops, and nothing can stop his rapid progress toward wealth and prosperity."

## Prices and Terms

The men who make up the Southern Colonization Company have been engaged for years in the important work of making large tracts of land available for settlement. In dozens of instances we have taken over large acreages from corporations or individuals who were merely holding them and have rapidly placed them in the hands of small colonization and retailing companies or have retailed them directly. We are content with a fair profit for our services, which are as necessary in land selling and settlement, as those of the wholesaler and jobber in merchandizing. We delight in opening up an unsettled district. That's the fun of our business. As in all our past enterprises of a similar nature, we plan to divide the fruits of this enterprise with those who co-operate with us. We purpose to retail and wholesale Kissimmee prairie lands at moderate prices and reasonable terms. These will be quoted on application.



Hillard Home Near Kissimmee.

We are not resorting to the auction plan of selling our land, and we are not donating town-lots. We sell to bona fide investors and settlers, and we want them to inspect the land before they buy. We are taking our patrons to Florida on the regular excursion days. We are well supplied with automobiles, have a comfortable camp on the land and are fully prepared to make the prospective buyer's trip comfortable and delightful in every respect. We shall be glad to give full particulars as to railway rates, routes, etc., on application. We would suggest that, if you are interested, you should act at once. You might as well be among the first as among the last buyers, and judging by our past experience the interval between first and last will not be long. The largest and quickest profits are for the early buyers.

Seeing the  
Land

An acre in Florida will produce as much as an acre in the irrigated fruit districts of the West. Yet raw land in the favored Western valleys sells as high as \$200 an acre and improved land—that is with orchards—at from \$500 to \$3,000. In Florida cultivation and fertilization take the place of irrigation in the West. The net profit from Florida acres is as great as the net profit from California, Washington or Oregon acres. Why then the difference in price? Simply because the Florida people do not know what they have. They haven't yet had the courage to price their

Investment  
Points

lands at their intrinsic value. The time is near at hand when that will be done. The conclusion is obvious.

### **The Prairie's Advantage**

The prairie has a great advantage over the rest of Florida in the fact that, not having to be expensively cleared, it is adapted to farms. The man who has to spend \$50 an acre clearing his land is disposed to content himself with a few acres and then make them produce to the limit. In other words, he raises fruit and garden-truck exclusively. But Florida lands produce great corn and forage crops, and where broad acres can be obtained there is great profit in diversified farming. On the Kissimmee Prairie a man can buy a quarter section for about what it would cost him to buy and clear twenty acres in the timber. He can have his truck fields and his orchards, and he can have hay and corn and other forage crops and cattle besides. He does not need to put all his eggs in one basket. Whatever happens to

### **Cattle, Hogs and Sheep**

the market or to the crops, he is tolerably sure to play safe. The Kissimmee Prairie man with his cattle, his hogs, his sheep, his chickens, his hay and forage, his corn, his truck-gardens and his orange and grape-fruit groves is independent. Some men do not care to raise truck; they prefer to farm extensively. Most northern farmers have been trained along the lines of cattle-raising and field-farming. A farmer with such experience has a golden opportunity in Florida, for most of his fellow laborers are farming intensively. Florida does not pretend to be a corn state, but thirty to seventy-five bushels of corn can be raised to the acre and it is worth \$1.00 a bushel. If a farmer puts up more hay than his own stock can consume, he can sell it for \$15 to \$20 a ton. This last season a ranch on the Kissimmee River sold 500 bales of hay at \$20 the ton. Of course, it is obvious that while the Kissimmee Prairie makes large farms practicable and profitable, it is just as well adapted to the man who prefers to operate ten or twenty acres.

### **Land and the Food Crisis**

Population is outrunning food production in the United States. The cost of food is becoming ruinously high. Leading economic authorities predict that the United States will soon cease to export food stuffs. The present era of high prices is simply a demonstration that there is too little production and too much consumption. We are really face to face with an economic crisis. To re-establish the equilibrium the number of farms must be greatly increased. The food boycott is not a permanent solution of the matter of high prices. The supply must be increased. To increase the supply, there must be more farmers and more farms. That means a great appreciation in the value of agricultural land. The more productive the land the greater the increase. Florida





Navel Oranges, Bryan Grove.

land, now ridiculously cheap, with its ability to produce two to four crops a year and with its proximity to the great markets (1,000 miles from New York and Chicago as against 2,500 and 3,500 for California) and excellent transportation facilities, rail and water, will increase in value more than any other agricultural land in America. In this booklet considerable space has been devoted to pointing out the advantages of the Kissimmee Prairie for stock raising. The present meat famine should lend special emphasis to what has been said in that regard. The Florida prairies are today the largest stock ranges in America east of the Mississippi River, and in view of their ever-greenness and freedom from destructive storms and droughts are probably the best grazing land on the continent.

A few words should be written here regarding the personnel of the Southern Colonization Company. It is composed entirely of men of high standing in the business world. All of those concerned with the active management are men of long experience in the buying and vending of land or in colonization and the promotion of immigration. They have operated for many years in the lands of Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, and Western Canada. They have never handled any but good lands, and they have always acted on the theory that the legitimate land business is one which is of the highest importance to the agricultural development and population of

**The Men of  
the Company**

America, and that a sale of good land is a transaction alike profitable to buyer and seller. In the space of fifteen years they have bought and sold several millions of acres of land. Mr. Frederick B. Lynch, the president of the company, has been actively interested in the purchase and sale of many large tracts of land in Minnesota and Canada. The companies in which he has been active have been among the most successful of the large northwestern land companies—companies with which many who read this book are familiar. The others actively connected with the management of the company—Mr. Nicoll Halsey, vice-president; Mr. Albert J. Nason, treasurer; Mr. Theodore M. Knappen, secretary—have long been associated with Mr. Lynch, and are thoroughly familiar with the land business.

## In Review

In the foregoing, we have tried in a conservative fashion to give the reader some conception of the exceptional advantages of the Kissimmee Prairie under our development plans. At the risk of repetition, we would recapitulate those advantages as follows:

First—Clear prairie. That means no expensive clearing.

Second—A fertile soil, easily cultivated.

Third—Adaptability to practically every crop that can be raised in Florida.

Fourth—The best all-the-year-round climate in America for comfort and health.

Fifth—Ownership of a large tract—500,000 acres—by a company of great financial strength and responsibility, thus permitting the purchaser to buy in any-size block easily and with confidence in titles and transactions.

Sixth—Prices so low, and terms so reasonable that large profits are assured to the purchaser utterly regardless of the use or non-use of the land by him.

We can say no more here. We would like to have you do the rest of the talking. If you will join one of our excursions, and see the land for yourself, we are sure you will tax your vocabulary to its limits in your efforts to express your satisfaction.

# Southern Colonization Company

422-434 Endicott Building, - - St. Paul, Minn.

501-503 Atlantic National Bank Building, Jacksonville, Fla.

234-235 Monadnock Building, - - - Chicago, Ill.

719 New York Life Building, - - - Kansas City, Mo.

715 Traction Terminal Building, - - Indianapolis, Ind.

### OFFICERS

Frederick B. Lynch, *President*  
Albert J. Nason, - *Treasurer*

Nicoll Halsey, *Vice President*  
Theodore M. Knappen, *Secy*





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